

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE SPECIFICATION**

**WILDLIFE WATERING FACILITY
(no.)
Code 648**

GENERAL SPECIFICATION

Procedures, technical details and other information listed below provide additional guidance for carrying out selected components of the named practice. This material is referenced from the conservation practice standard for Wildlife Watering Facility (648) and supplements the requirements and considerations listed therein.

PURPOSE

To provide drinking water for wildlife in New Mexico.

PLANNING

Wildlife watering facilities will be planned to supplement existing habitat conditions and to meet the water requirements of the wildlife species under consideration. This will be a permanent installation with year round water available for many species of wildlife. In locations where the winters are severe, year round water may not be feasible. Consideration of existing water sources in the area is essential to properly provide the needed water supply for wildlife.

Facilities will be designed to provide water to any terrestrial wildlife which inhabits the area, including birds, small mammals and large game. This is best done by placing water at ground level. Pronghorn and many reptiles and birds prefer water at ground level. Designs must include escape ramps or otherwise incorporate ramps into the trough. If the storage is uncovered it must also have an escape ramp built in.

Facilities such as aprons, storage tanks, pipes, valves, etc., which could be damaged by large animals will be protected with fencing.

Protection from freezing must also be included for exposed plumbing, valves, etc.

TYPES OF FACILITIES

Suitable types of facilities include:

- man-made impervious catchments with storage tank and drinking trough, such as concrete, steel, asphalt covered wood, fiberglass, etc.
- natural rock surface catchments with storage and trough.
- natural rock surface apron with rock rubble dam and pond.
- earthen dugouts, pits, ponds.
- drinking troughs.

These facilities can be filled as appropriate, by rainfall, surface runoff, pipeline, stream diversion, water hauling or combinations of these.

SUPPLY

The following wildlife water requirements will be met by planned facilities:

- mule deer - 1-2 gallons/animal/day
- whitetail deer - 1-2 gallons/animal/day
- pronghorn - 1-2 gallons/animal/day
- elk - 5-8 gallons/animal/day
- quail - 750 gallons/covey/year
- wild turkey - 500 gallons/flock/summer
- mourning dove - 2-5 gallons/day/facility
- songbirds - 1-2 gallons/day/facility
- lesser prairie chicken -
- require no free water except

Conservation practice general specifications are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version, contact the natural resources conservation Service.

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- in dry years - see quail.
- rocky mtn. bighorn sheep -1-2 gallons/animal/day
- desert bighorn sheep - 1-2 gallons/animal/day
- cottontail rabbit - 0.25 gallons/animal/day
- chukar - 750 gallons/covey/year
- pheasant - 2-5 gallons/day available year long
- sage grouse - 500 gallons/flock in summer
- blue grouse - 500 gallons/flock in summer

SPACING

Spacing requirements are applicable when multiple facilities are planned.

Spacing of facilities generally will not exceed the following:

- mule deer - 1 facility/1-2 square miles
- pronghorn - 1 facility/2-3 square miles
- elk - 1 facility/1-3 square miles
- quail - 1 facility/0.5-1 square miles
- turkey - 1 facility within 1/4 mile of feeding or roosting sites on summer range
- mourning dove - 1 facility within 4 miles of feeding or nesting areas
- songbirds - 1 facility within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of feeding or nesting areas, or where concentrations are desired
- rocky mtn. bighorn sheep - 1 facility/1-2 square miles
- cottontail rabbit - 1 facility/0.5-1 square mile
- Chukar - 1 facility/0.5-1 square mile
- pheasant - 1 facility/0.5-1 square mile
- sage grouse - 1 facility/3-4 square miles
- blue grouse - 1 facility/1-2 square miles

CONSTRUCTION

- Construction plans will be prepared for each facility and will specify the following items:
- location of the facility
- wildlife species to be benefited
- water source
- spacing between facilities or natural sources.
- amount of water storage or delivery capacity
- method of livestock exclusion
- list of construction materials
- engineering design of proposed facility or applicable job sheet

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Annual inspections shall be performed to insure that the facility is functioning as intended. Any broken valves, plumbing, fences or other deficiencies shall be corrected, repaired etc. Several populations of wildlife will become dependent upon this water source and long periods without water may place these groups in jeopardy.

AVAILABLE JOB SHEETS

Biology Technical Note No. NM-47, November 1998. USDA, Soil Conservation Service, Eight standard drawings of various wildlife water units.

Wildlife Management Techniques Manual; 4th edition revised; Edited by Sanford D. Schemnitz, Professor, Department Head New Mexico State University; Illustrated by: Larry Tozchik, Phoenix, AZ; The Wildlife Society, Washington, D.C. 1980.

Technical Note 305 (Sept. 1977) USDI, Bureau of Land Management, Guidelines And Recommendations For Design And Modifications Of Livestock Watering Developments To Facilitate Safe Use By Wildlife.